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Romeo didn't want to play pool with Jack Was Every Inch a (One-Eyed) Sailor anymore.

Today Jack lost, as usual. But he threw a tantrum about it. He cursed the pool gods, and luck.

Why do you have all the luck? he demanded.

Romeo said he was a better player; that's all.

That made Jack Was Every Inch a (One-Eyed) Sailor throw a billiard ball across the room; it ricocheted against the wall, then bounced all the way down stairs.

Jack Was Every Inch a (One-Eyed) Sailor protested. Romeo just didn't care, did he?

He didn't think that had anything to do with it. He was supposed to beat him.

They were playing a game.

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Coelacanths swam waddled paddled floundered up to the window and gaped in. If they'd opened their traps any wider, he'd have got dizzy. He'd have been swallowed like Jonah. Already he felt sea-sick, imagining their breath. Not that he had to for very long. Some low-grade was sure to shove his ugly mug in Johnny's, sooner or later....

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Sometimes they giggled to themselves at the door, or laughed outright on the way in, like they bought his shit to humor him....

All the shit he had. Mountains of cracked 78s. Scratchy vinyl LPs. Al Hirt plays music for strings and s/trumpets. Foxy sheet music. Always, by Raymondo Hardalot.

Some old dinosaur thought he needed a bigger store. I don't know, was all Johnny said.

You must be an awfully rich man, the fossil insisted. He was wearing the insignia of the OLD FARTS OF PARNASSUS COLLEGE on his blue polyester blazer.

How so? Johnny wondered.

You must be an awfully rich man, if you don't know what you have.

All I have is debts, Johnny said; the fucker didn't know how true.

They got depressed when they couldn't find price-tags on anything. They had to ask Johnny, who always jacked up the prices as much as he could get, that fucker.

An enormous green garbage truck stank up Thing Street. It lumbered down Dung, heading straight for Romeo's thousand-dollar plate-glass aquarium window. One day it would smash right through. Romeo took bets when, after working out the odds.

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He expected Johnny to bring all the vinyl out to him, armful by crushingly heavy armfull. While he sat in his chair, and licked every one. For the beauty of it hot, fresh out of the inner-sleeve. Cunilingus for senile dements. Then he had the nerve to offer hot and sweaty